

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:	)	
BRENT C. PARENT et al.	)	Group Art Unit 3693
	)	
Serial No. 09/504,000	)	Examiner Jagdish Patel
	)	
Filed: February 14, 2000	)	Confirmation No. 7392
	)	
For: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR MODELING	)	Attorney Docket 1-28703
A SIMULATED FLEET OF ASSETS	)	

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Commissioner For Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

BRIEF ON APPEAL

Honorable Sir:

This Appeal is taken from the Examiner's Final Rejection of Claims 1, 2, and 22 in the above-identified application. The Notice of Appeal was timely filed on March 17, 2008, together with a Pre-Appeal Brief Request For Review. The Notice Of Panel Decision was dated April 22, 2008. Please charge Deposit Account No. 13-0005 in the amount of \$510.00 to cover the fee pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 41.20(b)(2).

(I) Real Party In Interest

The real party in interest is Dana Holding Corporation, the assignee of record.

(II) Related Appeals And Interferences

None.

### (III) Status Of Claims

Claims 1-22 are pending in the application.

Claims 1, 2, and 22 have been finally rejected by the Examiner and are involved in this appeal.

Claims 3-15 have been objected to, but would be allowable if re-written in independent form.

Claims 16-21 have been allowed.

### (IV) Status Of Amendments

No amendments have been filed subsequent to the final rejection.

### (V) Summary Of Claimed Subject Matter

The invention recited in independent Claim 1 relates to an electronic system 20 (Pg. 36, Lines 11-14) for modeling a simulated fleet comprising:

a simulated fleet configuration unit (Pg. 36, Line 29-31) configured to allow a user to add one or more assets 22<sub>1</sub>, ..., 22<sub>n</sub>, (Pg. 11, Lines 4-5) to said simulated fleet, each asset having a parameter associated therewith (Pg. 11, Lines 7-11);

a reporting and analysis module 62 (Pg. 38, Lines 10-15) configured to generate a report (Pg. 38, Lines 31-34) having a composite output 282 (Pg. 38, Lines 32-34) that corresponds to said parameter and is characteristic of all of said assets in said simulated fleet; and

a communications interface configured to facilitate electronic remote access of said system by the user (Pg. 5, Lines 27-29; Pg. 6, Lines 29-30; and Pg. 13, Lines 13-14).

The invention recited in dependent Claim 2 relates to the electronic system 20 for modeling a simulated fleet of independent Claim 1, from which it depends, and includes all of the limitations disclosed therein. The electronic system 20 for modeling a simulated fleet recited in dependent Claim 2 further defines the simulated fleet configuration unit (Pg. 36, Line 29-31) as comprising one of:

a fleet builder module, including a step-by-step asset entry system; a fleet search module including a first add-to-fleet feature (Pg. 36, Line 29 - Pg. 37, Line 2);  
a simulated fleet module 50 including an add-asset feature (Pg. 37, Lines 4-5);  
and  
a market search module 58 including a second add-to-fleet feature (Pg. 37, Lines 26-27).

The invention recited in independent Claim 22 relates to an electronic system 20 for modeling a simulated fleet comprising a combination of pre-existing fleet assets and simulated assets (Pg. 11, Lines 2-6) comprising:

a simulated fleet configuration unit configured to allow a user to add one or more simulated assets to said simulated fleet (Pg. 36, Lines 27-34 and Pg. 37, Lines 1-3), each pre-existing and simulated asset having a parameter associated therewith (Pg. 36, Lines 11-15);

a reporting and analysis module 62 configured to generate a report 274 having a composite output 282 that corresponds to said parameter and is characteristic of all of said assets in said simulated fleet (Pg. 38, Lines 31-34); and

a communications interface configured to facilitate electronic remote access of said system by the user (Pg. 5, Lines 27-29; Pg. 6, Lines 29-30; and Pg. 13, Lines 13-14).

#### (VI) Grounds Of Rejection To Be Reviewed On Appeal

The grounds of rejection to be reviewed on appeal are set forth, from the Office Action dated December 13, 2007, as follows:

A. Whether independent Claim 1 is unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) over WO 99/06934 to Pisula et al. (the Pisula reference);

B. Whether independent Claim 22 is unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) over the Pisula reference; and

C. Whether dependent Claim 2 is unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) over the Pisula reference.

(VII) Argument

All rejections which form the basis for this appeal have been made under 35 U.S.C. §102(a).

A. Independent Claim 1 Ground of Rejection

Independent Claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by the Pisula reference.

Independent Claim 1 is directed to an electronic system for modeling a simulated fleet. The electronic system includes a simulated fleet configuration unit configured to allow a user to add one or more assets to the simulated fleet. Each asset has a parameter associated therewith. The electronic system further includes a reporting and analysis module configured to generate a report having a composite output. The composite output corresponds to the parameter and is characteristic of all of the assets in the simulated fleet. Also, the electronic system has a communications interface configured to facilitate electronic remote access of the system by the user.

The Pisula reference does not disclose a reporting and analysis module configured to generate a report having a composite output as specifically recited in Claim 1.

The specification describes "a report 274 generated by reporting and analysis module 62. In particular, each asset listed in the report has an associated plurality of parameters, such as average monthly usage hours, total maintenance cost, hourly maintenance cost, total lease cost, total operating cost, total hourly cost, percent utilization, etc....The user may then select the target fleet (existing or fantasy) for which the report(s) will be generated. A user can evaluate changes made to an existing fleet by generating a report for an existing fleet, configuring a simulated fleet reflecting the proposed changes, and then generating a second report." (emphasis

added, See Pg. 38, Lines 10-15 and 17-22). Thus, the simulated fleet has a separate, second report that is different than the first report for the target fleet. The different reports support the structural distinction between real and simulated fleets.

"Reporting and analysis module 62 is configured to generate report 274 having a composite output 282 that is characteristic of all the assets in the simulated fleet. The composite total hourly cost 282 can then be compared to the corresponding total hourly cost for the existing fleet (in the other report) to make an evaluation of the proposed changes. Another composite output shown in Figure 14 is percent utilization 284." (emphasis added, See Pg. 38, Lines 31-34 and Pg. 39, Line 1-3). The composite output is a comparative element "that may be a composite of a plurality of specific, actual-assets of the same or similar type" in the simulated fleet report to evaluate the "what if" scenarios created by the user. (Pg. 15, Lines 19-20) "A preconfigured asset brings these composite values when added to a fleet." (Pg. 15, Lines 24-25). The data that represents a simulated fleet is clearly of a different character than the data of a real fleet. Thus, the reports containing the composite values for simulated assets are structurally different from the reports containing real assets.

"It should be appreciated that some of the composite parameter values are determined by reporting and analyzing module 62 according to an arithmetic sum function, such as the total maintenance cost parameter. Reporting and analyzing module 62 is further configured to determine other composite parameters, such as hourly maintenance cost, utilization, and total hourly cost, according to an arithmetic average function. The parameters dealing with money amounts (e.g., dollars) required or desirable to make an asset acquisition determination may be characterized as a financial figure of merit. Other parameters, such as utilization percent, may be characterized as a performance figure of merit." (emphasis added, See Pg. 39, Lines 4-15).

Thus, it is clear from the preceding description that the reporting and analyzing module arithmetically manipulates the simulated fleet data and outputs this manipulated data in the report generated by the electronic system. The composite output is the result of a summation or other mathematical manipulation that is not taught

or suggested in the Pisula reference. The report of the Pisula reference is identified by the examiner as an inventory report, which is a mere listing of assets. Even the "Electronic Data Interchange reports" that may include "weight messages, inventory reports, arrival notices, and standing orders" (see Pisula, Pg. 6, Lines 7-9) are not suggestive of the arithmetic manipulation of data as is included in the report having the composite output recited in Claim 1.

Finally, the Pisula reference discloses a "Demurrage Charges module 128 [that] enables a user to review each of their plant's demurrage accounts for a current month and any of the previous five months. By choosing one or more accounts from a list for the specified month, the detailed demurrage information can be analyzed by an entire account or just by specific transport services that service the account." (See Pisula Pg. 8, Lines 22-26). There is no teaching or suggestion that the analysis of accounts is carried out by the system or that a report of the account analysis is generated. Thus, the Pisula reference does not show an electronic system having a reporting and analysis module configured to generate a report having a composite output. Therefore, the Pisula reference cannot anticipate the electronic system recited in Claim 1.

The Examiner further states, in the office action dated December 13, 2007, that "the claimed invention recited 'simulated' only in terms of intended use without distinguishing the structure in terms of the simulated assets." This statement is incorrect. Independent Claim 1 specifically defines the invention as including, among other things, a simulated fleet configuration unit configured to allow a user to add one or more assets to the simulated fleet. This is a positive and clear limitation of the invention, not merely a statement of intended use as suggested by the Examiner. The distinction of a simulated fleet from a real fleet, as stated above, is also a structural limitation based on the different constituents within each fleet and the different treatment of each fleet within the system. Thus, this limitation and the other limitations of the claims clearly and unambiguously distinguish the invention structurally from the Pisula reference.

Claim 1 also requires "a simulated fleet configuration unit configured to allow a user to add one or more assets to said simulated fleet." The Pisula reference does not show any simulated fleets and does not provide a system to change one.

Structurally, the system is configured to permit users to add assets from a variety of sources that are not available in the current fleet module 52. The Pisula reference, on the other hand, discloses only real assets and fleets and provides "a system and method [for] accessing freight transportation network information over the internet" (see Page 2, Lines 11-12). There is no teaching or suggestion that a user of the system in the Pisula reference creates a simulated fleet or a simulated freight transportation network, much less modifying the simulations. Since system of the Pisula reference is directed to "graphically organizing freight transportation network information on a map over the internet" (Pisula, Pg. 1, Lines 14-15), there is no teaching or suggestion that a simulated fleet, or a simulated transportation network for that matter, is useful or desirable. The users in the Pisula reference are moving actual freight over actual routes, not comparing "what if" scenarios of fictitious fleet compositions.

Further, the Pisula reference solves problems related to tracking of real assets wherein "many of the major transportation industries provide various traditional methods by which a customer may obtain the current status of their shipments" (see Page 2, Lines 20-21). Thus, the discussion of background art clearly defines the problems that the Pisula reference solves as providing information related to real assets, rather than simulated assets (see Page 2, Lines 1-6). In other words, the user is tracking information based on real user assets in the freight transportation network. The user is not tracking information on assets, whether real or fictitious, that are not under the user's control through, for example, ownership or lease.

The Examiner refers to Figs. 4 and 5 of the Pisula reference as examples relating to "a simulated fleet configuration unit" as defined in Claim 1. However, the Pisula reference does not teach that Figs. 4 and 5 (or any of the other figures, for that matter) relate to a "simulated fleet." Confirmation of the "real" nature of assets in the Pisula reference is found in the description regarding exemplary diagram Fig. 4. As

discussed therein, the information contained in Fig. 4 relates to real assets where a "user can view, print and export Electronic Data Interchange reports, such as weight messages, inventory reports, arrival notices, and standing orders" (see Pisula, Page 6, Lines 4-11). When read in context with the field, background, and summary of the Pisula reference, it is clear that Fig. 4 relates only to real assets (see Pisula, Page 1, Lines 12-26 and Page 2, Lines 1-28).

Additionally, the shipment status module 110 of the Pisula reference is structurally different from the simulated fleet configuration unit of Claim 1. The data contained in the shipment status module 110 is derived from actual data, such as "up-to-date car movement information for user-defined pools and corporate-defined fleets." (Pisula, Pg. 6, Lines 6-7). The fleet updating feature of the shipment status module 110 allows changes to equipment within the user pools. The user pools, however, are real assets of the user and thus constitute real data based on the real assets. From the description of the fleet tracing feature within the shipment status module 110 of the Pisula reference, the "fleet tracing feature provides the user with up to the minute movement information on their pools...of equipment transported by the transportation provider." (Pisula, Pg. 6, Lines 9-11). The Pisula reference relies on real data from real assets to provide up-to-date information regarding shipping schedules. Furthermore, the electronic data interchange reports in the shipment status module 110 are not comprised of "fantasy fleet" data.

A simulated fleet is defined in the specification as containing "(i) any assets in any of the user's existing fleets ("held assets"), (ii) new or used assets not held or controlled by the user such as may be available for purchase, rental, or lease from third-parties via the market, or (iii) fictional assets having a predetermined usage, and performance profile, from the preconfigured asset database 42." (Pg. 15, Lines 11-16). If the fleet contains only "held assets", the fleet would not be simulated, but rather an existing fleet. "An existing fleet is a fleet containing assets under the control of a user, for example, through ownership or lease." (Pg 15, Lines 9-10). The options available to a user under the simulated fleet are different than those for existing fleets. For



example, there is no bid module associated with the simulated fleet portion of the electronic system 20.

The modules and databases are segregated based on either simulated or real assets. "Simulated fleet module 50 is configured to allow a user 23 to access, add, view, edit and delete assets in a simulated fleet. "According to the invention, the 'Fantasy fleet' feature allows accurate and immediate 'what if' analysis, unavailable through the use of conventional systems. Current fleet module 52 allows a member or dealer to access, add, view, edit, or delete assets in one or more existing/actual fleets associated with the registered member or dealer" (emphasis added, Pg. 18, Lines 2-9). The bid module is associated with the market database 36. "Each asset in market database 36 has an associated asset profile comprising both asset specification data (including maintenance history data) and a bid definition." (emphasis added, Pg. 32, Lines 20-22).

Thus, the simulated fleet module, as part of the simulated fleet configuration unit, provides another example of the structural differences between the claimed invention and the Pisula reference. Accordingly, the Pisula reference unambiguously teaches a system for managing fleets of real assets. Thus, the Pisula reference does not disclose a "simulated fleet." The claims are, therefore, clearly patentable over the Pisula reference.

Furthermore, the distinction between real and simulated fleets is a functional distinction. The underlying data that makes up the different fleets is *functionally* related to the respective fleets. The data provides the distinguishing characteristics for each fleet and directly depends on the fleet make-up. Therefore, simulated fleets are functionally different than real fleets. Thus, the term "simulated" is not an indication of intended use as relied on by the Examiner.

Here, the printed matter in no way depends on the kit, and the kit does not depend on the printed matter. All that the printed matter does is teach a new use for an existing product. As the *Gulack* court pointed out, '[w]here the printed matter is not functionally related to the substrate, the printed matter will not distinguish the invention from the prior art in terms of patentability.' In re Ngai, 70 USPQ2d 1862, 1864

(Fed. Cir. 2004) quoting *In re Gulack*, 703 F.2d 1381, 1387-87 (Fed. Cir. 1983).

Thus, since there is a functional relationship between the data and the fleet for the purposes of the electronic system, there is a distinguishing element taught in the present invention that does not appear in the prior art. Therefore, the Pisula reference cannot anticipate the claimed invention. Furthermore, the data source is substantially different, i.e. data from the user's actual assets within his actual fleet versus composite data from fantasy fleets or actual data of assets outside of the user's fleet that may change over time. Finally, the real fleet data and the simulated fleet data are derived from different sources that are segregated.

#### B. Independent Claim 22 Ground of Rejection

Independent Claim 22 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by the Pisula reference.

Independent Claim 22 is directed toward an electronic system for modeling a simulated fleet. The simulated fleet comprises a combination of pre-existing fleet assets and simulated assets. The electronic system for modeling the simulate fleet includes a simulated fleet configuration unit configured to allow a user to add one or more simulated assets to the simulated fleet. Each of the pre-existing and simulated asset has a parameter associated therewith. A reporting and analysis module is configured to generate a report having a composite output that corresponds to the parameter associated with each of the pre-existing and simulated assets. The composite output is characteristic of all of the assets in the simulated fleet. A communications interface is configured to facilitate electronic remote access of the system by the user.

Independent Claim 22 more specifically and concretely defines the constituents of a simulated fleet. The simulated fleet includes both pre-existing (real) assets and simulated assets. The simulated assets are "fictional assets having a predetermined usage, and performance profile, from the preconfigured asset database 42. Preconfigured asset database 42 includes a plurality of asset specifications for various

asset types. The asset specification includes values that may be a composite of a plurality of specific, actual-assets of the same or similar type." (See Pg. 15, Lines 15-20). Thus, simulated assets are associated with *realistic but not real data*. The realistic data of the simulated assets is supplied by the preconfigured database and represents a collection of data for actual assets, that may be the same or similar to the simulated asset. The ability to "manufacture" data for assets further underscores the structural difference between the electronic system for modeling a simulated fleet of Claim 22 and the freight tracking system of the Pisula reference.

Additionally, Claim 22 recites a reporting and analysis module that is configured to generate a report having a composite output. The composite output corresponds to the parameter associated with each of the pre-existing and simulated assets. Since the simulated assets have manufactured data, the parameter associated with the asset is also manufactured and thus simulated.

As stated above, the composite output is a mathematically manipulated product of the reporting and analyzing module 62. There is no teaching or suggestion in the Pisula reference of a mathematical manipulation of data involved in the inventory report or the electronic data interchange report of the Pisula reference. Thus, the Pisula reference cannot anticipate the invention of Claim 22.

It is important to reiterate that the distinction between real and simulated fleets is a functional distinction rather than one of mere intended use, as stated by the Examiner. The underlying data that makes up the different fleets is *functionally* related to the respective fleets. The data provides the distinguishing characteristics for each fleet and therefore directly depends on the fleet make-up, and whether it is a real or a fantasy fleet. This is exactly the opposite situation from the inclusion of printed matter that teaches a new use for an existing product, as argued in *In re Ngai* and as distinguished from *In re Gulack*.

Here, the printed matter in no way depends on the kit, and the kit does not depend on the printed matter. All that the printed matter does is teach a new use for an existing product. As the *Gulack* court pointed out, '[w]here the printed matter is not functionally related to the substrate, the printed matter will not distinguish the invention from the prior art in terms of patentability.' *In re Ngai*, 70 USPQ2d 1862, 1864

(Fed. Cir. 2004) quoting *In re Gulack*, 703 F.2d 1381, 1387-87 (Fed. Cir. 1983).

Thus, since there is a functional relationship between the data and the fleet for the purposes of the electronic system, there is a distinguishing element taught in the present invention that does not appear in the prior art. Therefore, the Pisula reference cannot anticipate the claimed invention. Furthermore, the data source is substantially different, i.e. data from the user's actual assets within his actual fleet versus composite data from fantasy fleets or actual data of assets outside of the user's fleet that may change over time. Finally, the data for real and simulated fleets is derived from different sources that are segregated.

#### C. Dependent Claim 2 Ground of Rejection

The Examiner rejected dependent Claim 2 as being anticipated by the Pisula reference.

Dependent Claim 2 includes all of the limitations of independent Claim 1 and further defines the simulated fleet configuration unit as comprising one of a fleet builder module, a fleet search module, a simulated fleet module, and a market search module. The fleet builder module includes a step-by-step asset entry system. The fleet search module includes a first add-to-fleet feature, and the market search module has a second add-to-fleet feature. The simulated fleet module has an add-asset feature.

Each of the arguments presented above in support of independent Claim 1 apply with equal force to dependent Claim 2 and are reiterated herein. In addition, the simulated fleet configuration unit is further defined according to one of the modules contained therein. The simulated fleet configuration unit allows a user to "configur[e] a simulated fleet reflecting the proposed changes [to an existing fleet or a previous simulated fleet], and then generating a second report [for comparison of the effect of a change to the fleet]." (See Pg. 38, Lines 19-23). Each of the modules or module features of the simulated fleet configuration unit is associated only with fantasy or simulated fleets, as disclosed in the specification.

The fleet builder module includes a "fleet builder wizard to create a fantasy fleet and configure and add assets....This step-by-step entry system leads the user along, prompting for a fleet name, and location, an indication that it is a fantasy fleet, and prompts to add an asset. The add asset feature of the 'fleet builder' dialog is substantially the same as the 'add asset' feature of the current fleet module 52, described above (e.g., Figure 5)" (emphasis added, Pg. 38, Lines 1-9). While the fleet builder module for fantasy fleets may function in a similar manner to the "add asset" feature of the current fleet module associated with real assets, the fleet builder module is distinct and separate. The similarities of these modules, like the similar configurations of the fantasy fleets to the real fleets, enables a meaningful comparison of a simulated fleet to a real fleet.

The add-to-fleet feature of the fleet search module allows a user to "search his fleets by selecting search button 82 from the user's start page 66 (Figure 3), which invokes fleet search module 54. The search results contain an identification of the assets that are available for selection. . . .The user may then select a destination simulated fleet through the use of pull down menu 270, and then add the chosen asset to the desired fantasy fleet by 'clicking' on Add button 272" (emphasis added, Pg. 37, Lines 17-25). The simulated fleet module including the add-asset feature is clearly identified for use with simulated fleets.

Finally, the second add-to-fleet feature of the market search module "for adding assets to a fantasy fleet involves conducting a market search, using market search module 56, as illustrated in Figure 10. Then, the user adds assets by selecting the desired destination fantasy fleet through pull down menu 244, and 'clicking' on the Add button 242. Through this approach, items available in market database 36 may be added to the fantasy fleet." (emphasis added, Pg. 37, Lines 27-33). Thus, the electronic system of Claim 2 further distinguishes simulated fleets from real fleets. These distinguishing elements of the claimed invention are structurally different compared the Fleet Updating feature of the Pisula reference.

As can be readily seen from the foregoing arguments, there exist several structural differences between the real asset freight tracking system of the Pisula

reference and the electronic system for modeling a simulated fleet of the claimed invention. Any similarities between real fleets and simulated or fantasy fleets is designed for effective comparison purposes. As such, the Pisula reference does not anticipate the structure recited in Claims 1, 2, and 22. Thus, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of all claim rejections and issuance of a notice of allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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(VIII) Claims Appendix

1. An electronic system for modeling a simulated fleet comprising:

a simulated fleet configuration unit configured to allow a user to add one or more assets to said simulated fleet, each asset having a parameter associated therewith;

a reporting and analysis module configured to generate a report having a composite output that corresponds to said parameter and is characteristic of all of said assets in said simulated fleet; and

a communications interface configured to facilitate electronic remote access of said system by the user.

2. The system of claim 1 wherein said simulated fleet configuration unit comprises one of:

a fleet builder module, including a step-by-step asset entry system; a fleet search module including a first add-to-fleet feature;

a simulated fleet module including an add-asset feature, and

a market search module including a second add-to-fleet feature.

3. The system of claim 1 wherein said simulated fleet configuration unit is further configured to store data associated with said assets of said simulated fleet in a first database, said first database further including data associated with assets in an existing fleet, said simulated fleet configuration unit being further configured to allow the user to add assets from said existing fleet to said simulated fleet.

4. The system of claim 3 wherein said simulated fleet configuration unit is configured to execute on an application server.

5. The system of claim 3 further including a second database that includes data associated with assets available for one of a purchase, rental and lease transaction, wherein said simulated fleet configuration unit is further configured to allow the user to add one or more assets from said second database to said simulated fleet.

6. The system of claim 5 further including a third database that includes data associated with a plurality of pre-configured assets, each preconfigured asset comprising a parameter having a composite value derived from corresponding parameter values associated with a plurality of specific assets of a similar type, said simulated fleet configuration unit being further configured to allow the user to add one or more assets based on type from said third database to said simulated fleet.

7. The system of claim 6 wherein said simulated fleet includes a first asset from said existing fleet, and a second asset selected from one of said second database corresponding to assets for purchase, rental and lease, said third database corresponding to preconfigured assets, and user-defined assets.

8. The system of claim 3 wherein said assets comprise industrial equipment.

9. The system of claim 8 wherein said assets comprise forklifts.



10. The system of claim 9 wherein said parameter includes at least one of a total maintenance cost, an hourly maintenance cost, a total lease cost, a total operating cost, a total hourly operating cost, and a utilization rating.

11. The system of claim 10 wherein said parameter is one of said total maintenance cost, said total lease cost, and said total operating cost, and wherein said reporting and analyzing module is further configured to determine said composite output according to an arithmetic sum function.

12. The system of claim 10 wherein said parameter is one of said hourly maintenance cost, said total hourly cost, and said utilization, wherein said reporting and analyzing module is further configured to determine said composite output according to an arithmetic average function.

13. The system of claim 7 wherein said report associated with said simulated fleet is a first report, said reporting and analyzing module being further configured to generate a second report having another composite output that is associated with said existing fleet to thereby allow the user to compare said first and second reports to evaluate the existing fleet and the simulated fleet.

14. The system of claim 3 wherein said reporting and analyzing module is configured to execute on an application server.

15. The system of claim 3 wherein said communications interface comprises a Hyper-Text Transfer Protocol (HTTP) compliant web server.

16. An electronic system for modeling a simulated fleet comprising:

a fleet database including data associated with an existing fleet comprising a plurality of specific pieces of industrial equipment;

a market database including data associated with a plurality of specific pieces of industrial equipment that are available for one of purchase, rental and lease;

a simulated fleet configuration unit configured to allow a user to add a first piece of industrial equipment to said simulated fleet from said existing fleet based on data in said fleet database, said simulated fleet configuration unit being further configured to allow said user to add a second piece of industrial equipment based on data from one of said market database, and user-defined industrial equipment, each piece of industrial equipment having a parameter associated therewith;

a reporting and analysis module configured to generate a report having a composite output corresponding to said parameter that is characteristic of all pieces of industrial equipment in said simulated fleet; and

a communications interface configured to facilitate electronic remote access by said user.

17. The system of claim 16 further including a pre-configured asset database that includes data associated with a plurality of modeled pieces of industrial equipment based on type.

18. The system of claim 17 wherein said report is a first report, said reporting and analysis module being further configured to generate a second report having another composite output based on industrial equipment in said existing fleet to thereby allow the user to compare said first and second reports to evaluate said existing and simulated fleets.

19. A method of modeling a simulated fleet comprising the steps of:

(A) providing a fleet database including data associated with an existing fleet comprising a plurality of specific pieces of industrial equipment;

(B) providing a market database including data associated with a plurality of specific pieces of industrial equipment that are available for one of purchase, rental and lease;

(C) providing a pre-configured asset database that includes data associated with a plurality of modeled pieces of industrial equipment based on type;

(D) selecting a first piece of industrial equipment for inclusion in said simulated fleet from the existing fleet based on data in the fleet database, and further selecting a second piece of equipment based on data from one of the market database, the pre-configured asset database and user-defined pieces of industrial equipment, each piece of industrial equipment having a parameter of interest associated therewith;

(E) generating a report having a composite output value as a function of respective parameter values associated with the first and second pieces of equipment; and

(F) electronically transmitting the report to the user at a remote location.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein the report is a first report, said method further including the step of:

generating a second report having another composite output value based on respective parameter values associated with pieces of industrial equipment in the existing fleet to thereby allow the user to compare the first and second reports to evaluate the existing and simulated fleets.

21. The method of claim 20 wherein the parameter comprises a financial figure.

22. An electronic system for modeling a simulated fleet comprising a combination of pre-existing fleet assets and simulated assets comprising:

a simulated fleet configuration unit configured to allow a user to add one or more simulated assets to said simulated fleet, each pre-existing and simulated asset having a parameter associated therewith;

a reporting and analysis module configured to generate a report having a composite output that corresponds to said parameter and is characteristic of all of said assets in said simulated fleet; and

a communications interface configured to facilitate electronic remote access of said system by the user.

(IX) Evidence Appendix

None.

(X) Related Proceedings Appendix

None.